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MAR 06 2007

In the Specification:

On page 4, replace the paragraph starting at line 15 as follows:

In general, the material that serves as the base for the present invention can be any natural cellulosic material that is (or can be processed in way well known in the art to be) comprised of hollow fibrous tubes 12 prior to being processed to produce the improved moisture-absorbing material of the present invention.

Note, however, that better moisture-absorption and material expansion is achieved by starting with materials defined by long and flexible hollow fibrous cellulosic tubes. Such materials include cotton, hemp, kapok and milkweed, with cotton being preferred owing to its high linear hollow microfibril cellulose content. As mentioned above, processing of the material to make it consist of hollow fibrous tubes is known in the art. For example, ~~with respect to cotton, suitable processing steps are described by Chen et al. at~~

~~<http://tres.hc.utk.edu/textile/nonwovens/cottonfib.html>, the contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference.~~